

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9427

INFO SECDEF

AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

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TAGS: MARR, MILI, PARM, UK, NATO

SUBJECT: DEFENSE WHITE PAPER - 1975

REF: LONDON 4000

1. BRITISH DEFENSE WHITE PAPER (STATEMENT ON DEFENSE
ESTIMATES - 1975), WHICH IS TO BE ISSUED THIS AFTERNOON

CONTAINS NO SURPRISES. SIGNIFICANTLY LONGER AND MORE
COMPREHENSIVE THAN USUALLY IS THE CASE, THIS YEAR'S WHITE
PAPER CHRONICLES THE COURSE OF BRITAIN'S DEFENSE EFFORT
FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS (NO WHITE PAPER WAS ISSUED IN
1974), SETS OUT AT SOME LENGTH THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT
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OF THE DEFENSE REVIEW, AND LISTS FINAL GOVERNMENT DECI-

SIONS TOGETHER WITH RATIONALE FOR THESE ACTIONS. THE PAPER DISCUSSES NATO CONSULTATION, NOTES THE REACTION OF BRITAIN'S ALLIES TO THE PROPOSALS, AND INDICATES THE REVISIONS HMG HAS MADE OR RETAINS UNDER CONSIDERATION AS A RESULT.

2. WHITE PAPER 75 CONFIRMS INFO CONTAINED REFTEL. DEFENSE SPENDING FOR FY 75 AND 76 WILL RISE (FROM FY 74 LEVEL OF 3,560 - 3,612 MILLION POUNDS) TO POUNDS 3,700 AND 3,800 RESPECTIVELY IN CONSTANT 1974 POUNDS. ALL MAJOR PROCUREMENT PROGRAMS ARE RETAINED, BUT BRITISH FORCES ARE TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM SINGAPORE, GAN, BRUNEI AND MAURITIUS. THE THINOUT ON CYPRUS WILL BE UNDERTAKEN AT THE RATE ANNOUNCED IN PARLIAMENT LAST DECEMBER 3.

3. THE WHITE PAPER LISTS FIVE CHANGES HMG HAS MADE TO ACCOMMODATE NATO REQUESTS:

(A) HMS HERMES WILL BE CONVERTED TO ASW ROLE IN 1976 VICE 1978;

(B) THE FLEET AUXILIARY ENGADINE, CARRYING HELICOPTERS IN THE ASW ROLE, IS TO BE EARMARKED FOR CINCHAN;

(C) ADDITIONAL RECON AIRCRAFT ARE TO BE EARMARKED TO SACLANT/CINCHAN;

(D) RN ELEMENTS WILL PARTICIPATE IN PERIODIC NATO MARITIME EXERCISES AND WITH NATO ON CALL FORCE, MEDITERRANEAN; AND

(E) REINFORCEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE SPECIAL AIR SERVICE REGIMENT IN THE ACE SOUTHERN REGION WILL BE CONTINUED.

4. COPIES OF THE WHITE PAPER (CURRENTLY IMPOUNDED AS RESULT OF STRIKE BY PUBLIC WORKERS) WILL BE POUCHED WHEN AVAILABLE.

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